

Remarks

Claims 1-18 are at issue. Claims 4, 7, 9 & 18 stand rejected under 35 USC 112 second paragraph. Claim 16 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Claims 1-7, 14, 17 & 18 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Nyseth. Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being unpatentable over A.L. Schreiber. Claims 8-13 & 15 stand rejected under 35 USC 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Nyseth in view of Kwok.

With respect to the S-shaped cutout of claim 7, the applicants respectfully disagree that this is not shown in the drawing. Figure 2 numeral 53 clearly shows the S-shaped cutout. Unless the Examiner can further explain his position, the applicants are at a loss on how to respond to this issue.

With respect to claims 4 & 18 the applicants respectfully request that the Examiner cite the section of the MPEP or a case that supports this rejection under 35 USC 112 second paragraph.

With respect to claim 9, the Examiner is correct that once assembled the columns are in a single position 56 or 58. However the columns may be moved to a new position by use of a screw driver. The screws 40 are removed and the columns and screws are moved to the new position.

With respect to the Examiner's remarks it is true that the left column could be placed on the right and vice versa. Note that there is no rule against broad claims and the applicant only has to show a single embodiment that meets the requirements of the claim. The two positions 56 & 58 meet the "at least two position" requirement. Thus claim 9 is correct that the columns have at least two positions.

Claim 7 has been rejected under 35 USC 112 second paragraph, however the applicant is unable to ascertain what the objection to claim 7 is.

Nyseth clearly teaches away from the present invention. Nyseth teaches a FOUP that may be used for only one size of wafer. Nyseth teaches having different FOUPs for different sizes of wafers. The present application is directed to a device that fits inside a FOUP and allows a FOUP the ability to accept several sizes of wafers. The invention is not obvious in light of Nyseth and a person skilled in the art would be directed away from the invention by Nyseth. See *Monarch knitting Mach. Copr V. Sulzer Morat Gmbh*, 139 F.3d 877, 45 USPQ2d 1977 (Fed. Cir. 1998).

Claim 1 requires "two or more retention springs". The Examiner points to items 134 and 138 of Nyseth. The applicants respectfully

disagree with the Examiner. The description in Nyseth makes it clear that element 134 is a hooked lug and the element 138 is a tab. These are clearly not retention springs. In addition, Nyseth teaches away from this feature since there is no need for a retention spring in the FOUP of Nyseth since Nyseth does not suggest a cassette reducer be placed in a FOUP.

Claim 1 is allowable over the prior art.

Claim 2 requires a pair of interior arm cutouts, element 42 of the present application. These are clearly not shown in Nyseth. As explained in the specification (p. 4, l. 4-7) the cutouts allow easy access to the wafers in the cassette reducer. This is an important feature that is not shown in Nyseth because the device is designed to fit into a FOUP and Nyseth just shows a FOUP design. In fact, Nyseth teaches away from this feature, since there is no need for a cutout in a FOUP. Claim 2 is allowable over the prior art.

Claim 3 requires a base cutout, element 44 of the present application. This is clearly not shown in Nyseth. In fact Nyseth teaches away from this feature since Nyseth does not suggest a cassette reducer. Claim 3 is allowable over the prior art.

Claim 4 requires the cassette reducer fit inside the FOUP. Nyseth clearly teaches away from this since Nyseth does not suggest a cassette reducer. Claim 4 is allowable over the prior art.

Claims 5 & 6 are allowable as being dependent upon an allowable base claim.

Claim 7 requires an exterior partial S-shaped cutout, element 53 of the present application. As the specification makes clear, these S-shaped cutouts are necessary for the cassette reducer to fit inside the FOUP. This is clearly not shown in Nyseth. In fact Nyseth teaches away from this feature since Nyseth does not suggest a cassette reducer. Claim 7 is allowable over the prior art.

Claim 8 is allowable as being dependent from an allowable base claim.

Claim 9 requires that the columns have two positions. This is clearly not shown in Nyseth and Kwok.

Claim 10 requires a plurality of wafer supports that connect the first and second plate. The Examiner points to A. L. Schreiber. Clearly Schreiber teaches away from the present application since it does not teach anything related to a cassette reducer. The invention is not obvious in light of A. L. Schreiber and a person skilled in the art would be directed away from the invention by A. L. Schreiber. See *Monarch knitting Mach. Copr V. Sulzer Morat Gmbh*, 139 F.3d 877, 45 USPQ2d 1977 (Fed. Cir. 1998).

In addition, there is no rule against broad claims. The Examiner's analogy fails since the setter 1 is the same as one of the U-shaped plates,

then there are no wafer supports in Schreiber. The "setters 1 may be stacked one upon the other". See Page 2, Col. 1, lines 13-15. Claim 10 is allowable over the prior art.

Claims 11 & 12 require a plurality of retention springs. The applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner. The description in Nyseth makes it clear that element 134 is a hooked lug and the element 138 is a tab. These are clearly not retention springs. In addition, Nyseth teaches away from this feature since there is no need for a retention spring in the FOUP of Nyseth. Nyseth does not suggest a cassette reducer be placed in a FOUP as required by the present application. Claims 11 & 12 are allowable over the prior art.

Claim 13 is allowable as being dependent upon an allowable base claim.

Claim 14 requires that wafer supports be attached to the U-shaped plate. The wafer supports (27) of Nyseth do touch the U-shaped plates but they clearly do not attach the two U-shaped plates. See figure 2, elements 231 of Nyseth. In fact Nyseth teaches away from this feature since Nyseth does not suggest a cassette reducer. Claim 14 is allowable over the prior art.

Claim 15 is allowable as being dependent upon an allowable base claim.

Claim 16 requires a plurality of flexible disks, element 38. The prior art does not show any flexible disks. In fact Nyseth teaches away from this feature since Nyseth does not suggest a cassette reducer. Claim 16 is allowable over the prior art.

Claim 17 is allowable as being dependent from an allowable base claim.

Claim 18 requires the cassette reducer fit inside the FOUP. This is clearly not shown in Nyseth. In fact Nyseth teaches away from this feature since Nyseth does not suggest a cassette reducer. Claim 18 is allowable over the prior art.

The prior art cited by the Examiner teaches away from the present application. None the references cited by the Examiner suggests a cassette reducer that fits inside of a FOUP for the purpose of allowing the FOUP. The present invention is novel and non-obvious.

In the Claims(marked up version)

9(Amended). The semiconductor cassette reducer of claim [9] 8,
wherein the pair of columns have at least two positions.

Prompt reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested

Respectfully submitted,

(Beckhart et al.)

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Dale B. Halling
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